



MacFarlane's four-o'clock

Mirabilis macfarlanei

STATUS

Threatened (60 FR 10697, March 15, 1996)

DESCRIPTION

MacFarlane's four-o'clock is a perennial plant, with spectacular 1" magenta flowers. The flowers form clumps that are about 6"-12" in diameter. This plant's tap root is very deep in relation to the above-ground portion of the plant. Plants of this species reproduce primarily by sending out underground roots.

HISTORY

Botanists first learned of this plant in the 1930s from river boat operator Ed MacFarlane. MacFarlane's four-o'clock was thought to be extinct from 1947 to 1977. Additional populations of this plant were discovered in Idaho and Oregon in the early 1990s, which led to the plant's downlisting to threatened from endangered on March 15, 1996.

DISTRIBUTION

Plants may be found in canyonlands, on open slopes with sandy soils, and above rivers, with general west-southwest aspects. *Mirabilis macfarlanei* grows only in a unique geographic area in the Pacific northwest (west-central Idaho and adjacent Oregon), where growing seasons are long and winters are mild.

WHAT HAS THREATENED THIS SPECIES?

MacFarlane's four-o'clock may be threatened by livestock trampling, insect predation, herbicide spraying and non-native plant invasion.

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO HELP RECOVER THIS SPECIES?

Biologists are monitoring some populations to see whether they are stable, increasing or decreasing. Some areas have been fenced to protect plant populations from livestock grazing. Attempts have also been made to reduce impacts from herbicide spraying and highway construction projects. The Berry Botanic Garden in Portland, Oregon, is providing seed collection services, seed viability testing, and long-term seed storage.

REFERENCES

USFWS 1999. Draft revised recovery plan for MacFarlane's four-o'clock.

